

In the absence of reliable data related to vehicle use, the Equipment Management Division (EMD) interim fleet manager used a less formal method to measure use. When evaluators asked EMD staff how they measured vehicle use, the interim fleet manager stated that he occasionally walked through the Heal Garage and if he noticed that a car was too dusty, he assumed it was underused and could be assigned to another user.<sup>1</sup> The Deputy Mayor who oversaw the EMD stated that EMD staff used dust to measure use because its information systems were incapable of reporting use data.

A departmental vehicle coordinator confirmed that one of their vehicles was transferred in this manner. The coordinator told evaluators that a driver went to the Heal Garage to pick up a vehicle, found it missing, and almost called the NOPD to report it stolen. The Deputy Mayor who oversaw the EMD confirmed that EMD staff had assumed the vehicle was underused because it was dirty, and they had reassigned it.

**Figure 1.** Dirty Car in the Heal Garage



In addition, evaluators observed serious problems with vehicles during inspections:

- Two drivers stated that they would not drive vehicles on the interstate because the brakes were bad.

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<sup>1</sup> The Heal Garage is located at 300 LaSalle Street and houses City vehicles for departments and agencies located in City Hall including Community Development, the Registrar of Voters, the Health Department, and Capital Projects.

- Firefighters demonstrated that the doors on a fire truck that had just returned from fighting a house fire only opened if you rolled down the window and opened them using the handle on the door's exterior.<sup>2</sup>
- A garbage truck's front bumper was held in place with a bungee cord.

**Figure 2.** Fire Truck with Door Opened Only by Exterior Handle



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<sup>2</sup> Details of the September 10, 2015 house fire (which involved the rescue of people inside the house) are available in this news release from the New Orleans Fire Department <http://www.nola.gov/nofd/news-updates/2015/20150910-family-rescued-from-house-fire-in-new-orl/> and in this news story from Nola.com [http://www.nola.com/traffic/index.ssf/2015/09/2\\_rescued\\_from\\_eastern\\_new\\_orl.html](http://www.nola.com/traffic/index.ssf/2015/09/2_rescued_from_eastern_new_orl.html).

**Figure 3.** Bumper Fastened to Garbage Truck with Bungee Cord

